

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

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EXDIS

DEPARTMENT ALSO PLS PASS AS ACTION IMMEDIATE TO SECDEF WASHDC
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E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: OVIP, US, SP (GUTIERREZ MELLADO, D.MANUEL)
SUBJ: GUTIERREZ MELLADO'S TRIP TO THE US: REQUEST TO VISIT
US COUNTER-TERRORIST TRAINING FACILITIES

REF: MADRID 07474

1. DEFENSE MINISTER (AND FIRST VICE PRESIDENT) GUTIERREZ MELLADO HAS REQUESTED THAT HIS ITINERARY FOR HIS FORTHCOMING TRIP TO THE US INCLUDE A VISIT TO US MILITARY COUNTER-TERRORIST TRAINING FACILITIES. HE HAS INDICATED THAT IF US MILITARY NOT INVOLVED IN THIS TYPE OF ACTIVITY, HE WOULD LIKE TO VISIT FACILITIES OF USG AGENCY WHICH HAS ANTI-TERRORIST RESPONSIBILITIES. WE ASSUME THAT GUTIERREZ MELLADO'S REQUEST STEMS FROM OCCASIONAL REFERENCES IN THE PRESS HERE TO THE EXISTENCE OF A US MILITARY COUNTER-TERRORIST UNIT. WE HAVE TOLD HIM THAT WE WOULD CONVEY THIS REQUEST TO WASHINGTON.

2. GUTIERREZ MELLADO'S REQUEST IS THE MOST RECENT INDICATION OF A DESIRE ON THE PART OF THE GOS TO OBTAIN ASSISTANCE FROM OTHER GOVERNMENTS IN DEALING WITH ITS TERRORIST

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PROBLEM. PRIME MINISTER SUAREZ, IN HIS CONVERSATION WITH SENATOR BYRD JULY 1, SAID THE US SHOULD COLLABORATE WITH SPAIN IN THE PROVISION OF INFORMATION ON TERRORISTS AND TERRORISM (REFTEL), AND INTERIOR MINISTER MARTIN VILLA TRAVELED TO THE FRG RECENTLY TO VISIT THE GERMAN GS-9 COUNTER-TERRORIST ORGANIZATION. WE WOULD EXPECT THAT A VISIT BY GUTIERREZ MELLADO TO US COUNTER-TERRORIST

TRAINING FACILITIES MAY CONCEIVABLY BE FOLLOWED BY REQUESTS FOR ASSISTANCE IN THE FORM OF TRAINING AND MATERIEL.

3. THE MAJOR PRE-OCCUPATION OF THE GOS, OF COURSE, IS THE BASQUE TERRORIST ORGANIZATION, THE ETA, WHICH ALTHOUGH PARENTLY HAVING CERTAIN INTERNATIONAL LINKS AND OPERATING ACROSS THE SPANISH-FRENCH BORDER, IS ESSENTIALLY A DOMESTIC SPANISH PROBLEM. THE GOS MAY HAVE INTERPRETED THE RECENT DECLARATION ON HIGHJACKING AT THE BONN SUMMIT AS INDICATING THAT THE US, AMONG OTHERS, IS PREPARED TO CO-OPERATE MORE EXTENSIVELY WITH OTHER COUNTRIES IN COMBATTING TERRORISM GENERALLY, INCLUDING AN ESSENTIALLY DOMESTIC THREAT LIKE THE ETA.

4. WE BELIEVE IT WOULD BE IN OUR INTEREST TO BE AS RESPONSIVE AS WE CAN TO GUTIERREZ MELLADO'S REQUEST. IF IT IS NOT POSSIBLE, FOR WHATEVER REASON, TO ARRANGE FOR GUTIERREZ MELLADO TO VISIT OUR TRAINING FACILITY, WE WOULD URGE THAT HE AT LEAST BE BRIEFED ON THE SUBJECT IN WASHINGTON. IN THE MEANTIME, WE NEED TO ADDRESS THE BROADER QUESTION OF WHAT THE US CAN DO TO ASSIST SPAIN IN ITS COUNTER-TERRORIST EFFORT. THE GOS SEES TERRORISM AS THE MOST SERIOUS THREAT TO THE CONSOLIDATION OF DEMOCRACY IN SPAIN. OUR RESPONSE TO ANY FUTURE REQUESTS FOR ASSISTANCE IN THIS EFFORT WILL BE SEEN BY THE GOS AS A VITAL SIGNAL OF THE IMPORTANCE WE ATTACH TO THIS PROCESS.

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5. GUTIERREZ MELLADO DEPARTS FOR THE US ON SUNDAY, JULY 30. IT IS IMPORTANT TO HAVE AN ANSWER TO HIS REQUEST BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE. TODMAN

NOTE Y OC/T: NOT PASSED ABOVE ADDRESSEES.

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